

His Confession Shows Suicide Stole \$85,000

E. D. Davidson, City Counsel of New Rochelle, Robbed Own Clients

No Clew to Money; Public Record Clear

Thefts Began Ten Years Ago; Widow, Penniless, Making Restitution

NEW ROCHELLE, N. Y., Feb. 16.—One mystery in the suicide, on January 8 last, of Edward W. Davidson, for four years Corporation Counsel of this city, was cleared to-day, only to give way to a second quite as deep as the first. The discovery that Davidson had left a confession, in which he admitted he had robbed estates of which he was the attorney for the last ten years, until the amount reached close to \$85,000, furnished the heretofore unknown motive for his act.

What became of the stolen money the authorities of Westchester County are trying to learn.

Davidson shot himself in his home here some time during the night of January 8. He had spent the evening at home, playing games for an hour or more with his fourteen-year-old daughter, Nancy. His act shocked the entire community.

Home Life Happy

Besides having discharged the duties of Corporation Counsel in a most commendable manner, Mr. Davidson stood high in the Westchester County Bar Association and was a deacon in the Presbyterian Church. His home life was particularly happy.

Following the funeral, reports reached District Attorney Lee Davis that Davidson had been robbing his clients. When it was rumored that there was to be an investigation, friends tried to prevent it. The District Attorney, however, sent William Hoffkins, special investigator for his county, to this city. The report filed with the County Prosecutor by Mr. Hoffkins cleared up all the mystery surrounding the case, save the use to which the stolen money was put.

Davidson, according to the special investigator's report, left a signed confession. He gave a complete list of the clients he had robbed. His method, as he described it himself, was simple and ingenious.

By means of a rubber stamp outfit he forged mortgages for varying amounts against the estates entrusted to his management. The signatures were forged by his own hand. The mortgages began ten years ago, when he took \$5,000 to cover that amount, lost in an unfortunate Porto Rican investment, the amounts varying from time to time, the amounts varying from time to time.

A partial list of what he designated in his confession as "fake mortgages" showed Davidson's thefts to have been \$5,000 from Harry Wood estate, \$3,800 from Harry Archer, \$5,000 from Mrs. Charles Berrian, \$5,000 from John De Vaux, all of this city, and similar items from other estates located in surrounding towns. A second list read: "Kiel, \$5,000; Burell, \$5,000; A. Selwyn, \$11,000; Muir, \$7,000; McGraw, \$10,000; Eliza Perrin, \$10,000; Joseph Wittenberg, \$6,000."

Besides the list of the special investigator learned that Davidson had written personal letters to many of those whom he had robbed, confessing his act. He also wrote in great detail of his calculations to the manager of his law office, C. Forbes Hinman.

By a wife found after his death, Davidson left his entire estate, approximately \$25,000, to his widow. As soon as she became aware of all the existing facts, she communicated with her husband's attorney, Mr. Marshall McCarthy, and turned everything in her possession over to him, leaving herself practically penniless. Mr. Fallon has been directed to settle up the estate and now does so.

At the time Davidson committed suicide, it was stated he had become insane because of the sensational raids conducted here by United States Marshal McCarthy. He was, at that time, just completing his term as Corporation Counsel.

The evidence of theft found by Mr. Hoffkins led to the belief for a time that grave irregularities would be disclosed in the records of the Corporation Counsel's office. The most painstaking search, however, connected District Attorney Davis that Davidson had confined his thefts to his personal clients. His record as a public official is absolutely unblemished.

The estate left by Davidson, and from which it is thought likely material restitution may be made to those who suffered from his thefts, include the family home, an office building on the main thoroughfare, a small cottage and a camp in Maine. A meeting of all the creditors will probably be called as soon as the total equity of the estate is determined.

John Purroy Mitchell To Go on Active Duty Ex-Mayor, Now Major in Signal Reserve Corps, Ordered to San Diego

[Staff Correspondence] WASHINGTON, Feb. 16.—The War Department announced to-day that Major John Purroy Mitchell, former Mayor of New York and now of the aviation section of the signal reserve corps, has been ordered to active duty at San Diego, Cal., where he has been instructed to report to the commanding officer of Rockwell Field.

New Yorkers commissioned by the War Department to-day in the reserve corps included:

Engineer Corps—Kenneth M. Murchison, 101 Park Avenue, captain. Aviation Section, Signal Corps—Charles J. O'Connor, 118 St. James Place, Brooklyn, captain; Arlington R. Caghey, 24 Columbus Park, New Rochelle, second lieutenant.

Sanitary Corps, National Army—Frank L. McCartney, 203 West Eighth Street, captain; James C. McAlpine, 12th Regiment Armory, first lieutenant.

Paris Gay But Grim in Will To Conquer

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more discreet, although it is noticeable that all the prettiest girls are with the English.

Sergeant Tells Of His Romance

Romance will go on. A sergeant chauffeur told me this story:

"There was a girl," he said, "that used to pass by my automobile every morning about 10 o'clock. She was mighty pretty, and I learned 'bon jour' to say to her one morning when she went by. She smiled and said the same thing, and one morning about a week later I handed her an apple and said, 'Pour vous,' just like I had been taught. She came right back with 'Oh, thank you very much.' And I'm a son of a gun if I didn't find she spoke English just as good as I do, and I'd been doing 'bon jour' for a week."

One reason why Paris seems less a part of the front than London is its comparative immunity from air raids. The recent German attack was almost the first big raid which the city had experienced. The last one before that was in July, and on that occasion only one plane came over the city.

There were many theories as to the reasons for this immunity. Some persons said that the defenses of Paris were too strong, while others believed that the Germans had political reasons for not bombing Paris. The city has a fair amount of light at night, though, of course, it is surprisingly dark to any one who knows it before the war.

In addition to actual raids, there are occasional alarms in Paris. The signal that German planes or Zeppelins are coming is given by the sirens of fire engines which speed through the city. It is a fearful sound, with a wail suggesting all sorts of horrors. The signal that everything is over is a bright little tune on the trumpet.

Since raids have been few and until the last one comparatively harmless, Parisians do not pay much attention to the banshee notes of the siren.

Theatre Audience Ignores Alarm

It was in the opera house one night when the alarm was sounded, and the body left the theatre, nor did Chénal, the young soprano, sing off the key any more than usual.

Those who were at home left their houses and went into the streets to see the show. No planes appeared on this occasion, but there was a brilliant display, as some illuminating shells were fired and all the defence planes, carrying lights, scooted up above the city to see what they could find.

Much more annoying and almost as annoying as the siren is the sound of the French. Each driver holds himself to a certain speed, and during the evening, and he will not go beyond it except for the most fabulous sums. He also takes great pains to avoid railroad stations and other points where he is in danger of being hindered. One must doubt the story of Gallieni's saying Paris by rushing troops out in taxis. It seems incredible that he could have found chauffeurs who were willing to go.

Paris life except in very cold weather has annoyances rather than discommodities, and the temper of the people is excellent except when the cold comes. Fortunately, this winter has been fairly mild, and the suffering of last year probably will not be repeated.

Of course, there are thousands who are tired of the war, and most of the hurrah is gone. They do not say any more, "I want to get back and get at 'em," and think like that. But anyone who thinks that they will stop fighting short of a clean peace is mistaken. As far as the temper of Paris is concerned, they can go on as long as need be.

German "Lieutenant" Caught in Rochester

Von Carlhausen, Said To Be Kiel Naval School Graduate, Arrested

Secret Service men and naval intelligence officers, who went to Rochester, N. Y., on Friday on a mysterious mission, returned yesterday apparently well satisfied with the results of their trip. In Rochester, it was learned, they arrested Ernest von Carlhausen, who is said to be a lieutenant in the German navy.

CITY'S SAWMILL CUTS WOOD FOR POOR



Coal Prices Cut By Regulation of Jobbers' Profits

Two Hundred Ragged Children Attack Piles at Seventy-seventh Street and North River, While Trucks Carry Fuel to Needy Families

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16.—Reduction in the retail price of both anthracite and bituminous coal is expected by the fuel administration as the result of a decision announced to-night to eliminate jobbers' commissions after April 1.

Under the new regulations retail dealers will obtain coal at the same price, whether purchasing directly from the mines or through middlemen.

Jobbers now are permitted to add to the government price at the mine a commission of from 15 to 30 cents a ton, but the old practice will be resumed of making the jobbers look to the mine operators for compensation. The mine price will be increased slightly to provide for the operators' added expense, but it is anticipated that the advance will not be equal to the commission now allowed the jobber. The amount of the increase will be determined later.

Jobbers Called Profiters

Elimination of jobbers' commissions, the fuel administration announced, was necessary in order to wipe out a systematic form of profiteering which has increased the cost of fuel to the consumer.

"Under the system of allowing the jobbers a specific guaranteed commission," said the statement, "it developed that it was possible for some operators to adopt the practice of establishing subsidiary companies solely for the purpose of selling, thereby absorbing the jobbers' commissions. Another practice was that of 'swapping coal,' or exchanging coal for other commodities, thereby enabling the jobbers to act as jobbers for each other. Each might buy the coal of the other and then sell at the mine price, plus the jobber's commission."

Jobber Is Essential

"The operator who sold direct to the retailer was at a disadvantage, because he was forced to bear the selling expense and was not permitted to collect the jobber's commission."

"The jobber is essential to the conduct of the coal business, and the fuel administration has given careful study to the best means for insuring him a reasonable compensation for his services, while at the same time eliminating fictitious commissions, which were ultimately paid by the consumer."

Charge Steel Maker Forged Billet Stamp

Forrest Certified Defective Material for Ships, Government Alleges

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 16.—A warrant charging the forging of a government stamp used to signify that billets of steel have been adjudged suitable for use in warships, was issued to-day by a United States commissioner to-day against Prosper J. Forrest, son of the owner of the Edwin Forrest Foundry Company.

Forrest is already in the custody of the San Francisco police. His actions, according to a government official here, "endangered the lives of thousands of United States soldiers who have been ordered to Europe." The defective steel, it was charged, was sold for use in crank shafts and other parts of the machinery of government vessels.

The specific charge against Forrest is that he forged a government stamp on the steel. The evidence was gathered by the Naval Intelligence Bureau in conjunction with other Federal authorities, the founder while his father was in the East. He has been pursuing his alleged illegal practice since last December, the Federal authorities charge.

Some of this steel has been utilized already in the construction of government vessels which are now at sea. Immense profits accrued to Forrest through his alleged illegal practice, the Federal authorities said.

Insects Destroy Billions

City Begins Distribution Of Free Wood to the Poor

Two Hundred Ragged Children Attack Piles at Seventy-seventh Street and North River, While Trucks Carry Fuel to Needy Families

Distribution of 800 cords of free wood to the poor of New York City by the Mayor's coal committee and the Mayor's Committee of Women on National Defence, began yesterday afternoon on the pier at Seventy-seventh Street and North River.

Two hundred ragged boys and girls of assorted ages, their matted heads blue with cold, scampered down through Riverside Park and across the railroad tracks and fell upon that wood as eagerly as though it were the contents of Santa Claus's bag emptied out on the ground for their benefit.

What remained after their onslaught was loaded on a five-ton motor truck, furnished by the Park Commissioner, and was distributed in congested neighborhoods along West End Avenue.

Thirty Cords Given Away

Thirty cords of wood were given away yesterday, according to Robert Lackey, who has charge of the distribution in greater New York. Distribution, at rate of about thirty cords a day, will continue until there is no more wood, Mr. Lackey said. The committee already has eight hundred cords on hand and is receiving from twenty to thirty cords daily from the Park Commission.

Wood gathered by the Park Commission from Central Park, the driveways and city parkways is being sent to the Seventy-seventh Street pier, where it is cut into stove lengths. A small sawmill, furnished by Park Commissioner William E. Grell, has been installed at the pier, and men from the Bowers Mission are working day and night to get the eight hundred cords ready for distribution.

Children Swarm Pier

Yesterday was the occasion of the children's first and last appearance at the woodpile. They really were not supposed to attack that pile at all, but they were there when the trucks appeared near their homes. As soon as the news that free wood was to be had leaked out, however, they swarmed down to the Seventy-seventh Street pier armed with sticks and stones, big baskets and boxes, express wagons and baby carriages. Many of them had trudged ten or twelve blocks, and they begged so hard for wood to carry home that Mr. Lackey could not refuse. No more wood will be given out at the pier, however.

Police Supervision

To see that the privilege of obtaining free wood is not abused, policemen are stationed at the distribution points throughout the city. One of the first truck loads was dumped yesterday afternoon at the foot of San Juan Hill, at Sixty-second Street and West End Avenue. One policeman superintendent the unloading, while another went the street calling out the neighborhood. In a few minutes men, women and children came running from all directions and formed a line more than a block long.

People's Spirit Praised

"The fuel administration, believing in the democratic spirit, asked not that some but that all participate in the sacrifice necessary to save us from our own prosperity, and the American spirit arose and asserted itself. There was no crushing of the weak in a scramble, but all stepped except the few appointed to absolutely necessary work."

The reaction of the American people in the face of the greatest emergency which this generation has been called upon to face proved that they were true inheritors of the American spirit and practical advocates of the principle of democracy. They have demonstrated that free action and willing cooperation is more effective than autocratic compulsion. They imposed restraint upon themselves which the entire army of the United States could not have forced them to observe. It is the American spirit, the spirit of effective cooperation."

Coats—Very New

Spring models in youthful lines in two-tone and shepherd checks showing contrasting collars of silk poplin, belts and large pockets; 6 to 14 years.....\$9.49

Returned the Democratic party to power because it had kept us out of the war, yet within a month after it had resumed power we were in the war," he said. "We went to a stone quarry for bread, and we got just what we deserved—stones."

480 Ships for Allies Moved By Fuel Order

Garfield Says Coal Saving Released 2,000,000 Tons of Supplies

Railroad Congestion Was Also Relieved

Steel Shipments Now Normal, Administrator Declares in Defence

Before more than six hundred Williams College men, gathered last night at the Hotel Biltmore for the annual midwinter reunion in this city, Dr. Harry A. Garfield, United States Fuel Administrator and former president of Williams, defended the policy of the workless Mondays and explained why they were ordered.

Overseas Service Reestablished

As a result of the closing order, Dr. Garfield said, 480 ships, carrying more than 2,000,000 tons of food, fuel and munitions and other war supplies, which had been tied up in Atlantic ports, were bunkered and sent to sea from January 17, the day the order became effective, to January 29. A normal number of ships only remained at anchor, he declared, and the flow of supplies necessary to the American expeditionary forces and the Allies had been reestablished.

In addition, the Fuel Administrator continued, the rails were cleared for important shipments of steel and other commodities to factories, without which the most essential war industries inevitably would have been closed, "but not in an orderly fashion."

Dr. Garfield called attention to the fact that the nation's foreign commerce had increased from two billions in 1913 to nine billions, and said there had been placed on the railroads little more than one-half the number of locomotives necessary to carry the increased traffic, the remainder being sent to France and Russia. Almost without exception, he continued, the manufacture of war material was at its height about the first of last December. Then came the worst weather the country had experienced in twenty years. The railroads found the struggle against overproduction and blizzards too much for them, the administrator said, and some relief was necessary.

"To cite a few only of the most important articles," said Dr. Garfield, "the shipments of steel plates essential to the building of our ships fell off nearly 50 per cent during the period from the beginning of December to the middle of January."

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Praising the Bolsheviks, he said, "Russia to-day is threatening the foundations of imperialism. No matter which side wins, Britain or Germany, imperialism has nothing to fear, but if the Bolsheviks triumph, imperialism is doomed. Military experts tell us that the war can go on for twenty years and end in the devastation of the world, but peace can be obtained in thirty days if things take the right direction."

"Here's our old friend Alsace and Lorraine. We have a deep sentimental interest in Alsace and Lorraine. If we look into the real causes we will find that the great iron and coal deposits are located there, and that is what the war is over."

Nearing said that last September financiers from England and France conferred with financiers from Germany at Bern, Switzerland, over the fate of the coal and iron mines of Alsace and Lorraine. "While these men were conferring their fellow men were dying in the trenches," he said.

Nearing asserted that while this government had come out in opposition to secret diplomacy, it had signed a secret treaty with Holland three weeks ago.

One purpose of sending delegates to confer with the laboring classes in England and France, he said, was to bring the facts home to America and have "an outcry of truth at Madison Square Garden."

The delegates will meet this morning at Bryant Hall and this afternoon and evening at the Central Opera House, 295 East Sixty-seventh Street.

The speakers this afternoon are to be Morris Hillquit, Dr. Judah L. Magnes, James H. Maurer and Amos Pinchot. The occasion to-night is to be celebrated as "an international dinner," at which the speakers will be Lincoln Steffens, Lajpat Rai, Louis P. Houdin, Louis P. Lochner, Patrick McCartan, Harriet Park Thomas, of Chicago, and Assemblyman Shipplough.

HEARN

Fourteenth Street West of Fifth Avenue

FEBRUARY—Our Clearance Month

Only Nine Selling Days Left in Which to Clear All Odds and Surplus Before Inventory FEBRUARY 28th

Bargains Unusual All Over the Store

These offerings for both Monday and Tuesday.

Spring Silks

Crepe de Chine Printed Charmeuse Foulards Satins Taffetas Shantung

Are among the many favored for Spring.

According to Fashion authorities Silks will enjoy an enviable place in the STYLE WORLD this season.

These items are representative of great stocks of every wanted kind, and as usual the prices for the qualities are the lowest in the city.

New Foulards

Yard wide—new patterns, including the ever popular dot-black and colored grounds—value \$2.00.....1.64

Printed Satin Charmeuse

40-inch—new designs on black and navy.....2.25

Taffetas

35-inch—new shades of tan, blue, gray, green, brown, wine; also white and black—value \$1.04.....1.47

Satins

35-inch—Spring shades of tan, blue, brown, red, gray and green.....1.74

Washable Silk Duck

32-inch—principally white, with satin stripes in various colors—value \$1.50.....1.37

All-Silk Rough Shantung

30-inch—champagne, white and colors.....1.25

Striped Crepe de Chine

32-inch—a truly wonderful assortment of smart colored stripes in one or more colors—on white two special values.....1.85-2.14

Silk Crepe Shantung

Yard wide—heavy quality—white and colors—value \$3.00.....2.67

Crepe de Chine

40-inch—fine crepe weave—large assortment of light and dark colors—also white and black—value \$1.50.....1.25

Georgette Crepes

40-inch—fine crepe weave—large assortment of light and dark colors—also white and black—value \$1.50.....1.28

Satin Striped Poplin Cords

35-inch—silk mixed—day and evening shades—value \$1.00......78

Black Silks

35-inch—peau de soie, satin duchesse and chiffon—black taffetas.....1.47-1.75-1.95

Interesting News of Springtime Importance for Miss "6 to 14"

A Pretty Crash Frock

In delightful shades of tan and rose, with wide belts, pockets and large white collars—6 to 14 years special.....1.88

Two-Piece Middy Frocks

Consisting of full fitted white skirt and blouse, with collar and cuffs of Copenhagen Blue or Rose—6 to 14 years.....1.18

Gingham Frocks

Many new and becoming models in attractive plaids in large and small designs—6 to 14 years.....Special 1.16

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